

February 6, 1973

PERSONAL & CONFIDENTIAL

Lt. General Vernon Walters, USA
Deputy Director
Central Intelligence Agency Headquarters
Washington, D. C. 20505

Dear General Walters:

My last letter to you related, among other things, to national security and intelligence operations. For what little they are worth I am going to set forth a few more ideas in this field of endeavor.

As I indicated previously, this country has never actually had a thoroughly professional, high quality, specialized intelligence* organization. I think there is a great need for one. Additionally, I think there is an equally great need to reorganize, streamline, and make vastly more efficient, the operations of the entire intelligence community. President Nixon has a better understanding and more knowledge in this field than any President has had since I have been in the government service. This covers a 34 year span. The President recognizes the necessity for valuable intelligence operations, therefore, if we are going to make any real progress here it will have to be done during the next four years while he is at the White House.

First may I suggest to you why I believe it may be well to separate criminal investigations and general law enforcement responsibilities from intelligence work. Take, for example, two young men with the same intelligence quotient, ability, judgment, industry and other similar qualities. Let us assume that they graduated from the same university in the same department and with an equally good academic record. Despite this they have different personalities. One likes to think in clear cut almost black and white terms. A bank is robbed. This is clear, it cannot be disputed. The task is to find out who robbed it, locate and arrest him and turn him over to the proper officials for prosecution and sentencing. This is satisfying to one type of personality, the type that wants to get immediate results and ones which are unmistakably clear. This type of personality makes a good man to investigate criminal violations. Let us take this other personality who is at his best when he is thinking in terms that are very complex with various gray areas. He is the type of personality who is very perceptive, analytical, has quiet patience and is fond of weighing cogently multiple issues and conditions. His personality is better suited, therefore, to conducting work in the intelligence field and related security matters. One could elaborate on this same theme in some detail.**

* I refer here to domestic intelligence organization, not foreign.

** For example, there are differences in programs, techniques, training and objectives.

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In light of the above, I think this country could best be served by the separation of the one from the other so that we would not have square pegs in round holes. It has been my experience in the FBI that when we reassigned agents from criminal to intelligence work and conversely we would often come up with square pegs in round holes. A man who is excellent in criminal investigations turns out to be inefficient in intelligence work and the man who is excellent in criminal work fails to maintain this fine performance in the intelligence field (there are, of course, some few exceptions).

If there was a separation, it could be done in one or two ways. First, there could be a separate organization called, for example, the United States Security Service or Intelligence Service. I do believe that at some point in the future this will be absolutely necessary. As I have previously mentioned, all major countries of the world except this country have such a service. It may be that the time is not quite right for such an organization or there may be a reluctance to tackle it in the immediate future. A second course would be to keep both sections in the FBI but keep them separate from one another and under the same roof, building specialized operations in each area, but "never the twain shall meet." A man by his distinctive accomplishments would remain either in the criminal or intelligence field during the course of his entire career. All his training would be specialized to make him more efficient and productive.

If this is done the next step would be to set up an arrangement that would enable CIA and the Domestic Intelligence operations to strengthen each other in all possible ways. Liaison between them would not be at all sufficient. The cooperation between the two would have to be complete and in detail. There should be a continuing dialogue between the two as well as joint action so that the changes of the times would be met by changes in the two operations so as not to cause inflexibility and fossilization to develop with the mainstream going on around the two. To me it is quite evident that the pooling of the assets, resources, and brains which can be found in your international organization and in domestic intelligence operations, could not help but produce results far superior to anything known in the past.

Consideration could be given to setting up an Operational Board in the intelligence community. This could be one which had representation from all members of the community or it could be a limited representation board consisting of CIA and the FBI domestic intelligence operations. It may be that the former would be the better of the two. The essential purpose of this Operational Board would be to study, analyze and recommend on a continuing basis, ways and means for conducting joint operations in some cases or the pooling of assets to carry out the operations of a particular member of the intelligence community.

There is no nation thundering at our door now to form a serious security threat. We do not have any faction located in this country which has the capacity to seriously damage our security at this time.* As we know from history, we cannot naively think we have reached a millennium or that peace will be permanent. As a matter of fact, some evidence could be amassed to support the observation that down through the centuries the world has been a place where "peace breaks out every once in awhile." Apropos of this I am reminded of a conversation which American military men had with the philosopher George Santayana when they entered Rome during World War II. The American military men said, "Mr. Santayana, you are a philosopher of world-wide reknown, so will you tell us, can we look forward to a long, almost indefinite period of peace and tranquility in the world following the end of this war?" It is reported that Santayana smiled and replied, "Gentlemen, for a man like myself who lives in solitude and philosophizes it is possible to dream of a permanent peace and tranquility, but for men like you who live in the world and know it for what it actually is, there can be nothing but open or secret conflict."

We hope that George Santayana is wrong, but from the national security standpoint it would be wise to assume that he could be correct. From the last conversation I gathered that you recognize fully that there is indeed a body of thought developing in this country which is not in support of our constitutional procedures or a republican form of government. This body of thought is to be found too often where public opinion is molded. This body of thought originates in the minds of some intellectuals, scholars, educators who while not members of any subversive organization are convinced that the principles of our free society with its democratic processes are not best suited to the nature of men and should ultimately be supplanted by some social structure based on Marxist's values, principles and objectives. In fact, one much publicized scholar in his writings as you know, in the recent past has taken the position that a controlled society is much more to be desired than a free one. Hence, there are storm clouds ahead and I think it would be most unfortunate that when conditions seriously worsen in the future, (be it 10 or 20 or 40 years) we had no thoroughly efficient, professional intelligence organization to help our government maintain our historic values and goals. It would seem that in this relative period of quiet, the conditions are as good as they could be to start to build constructively, the kind of intelligence service that this country needs and should have as soon as possible.

Perhaps someday we may be able to sit down and discuss other aspects and ramifications of this national security problem.

With all good wishes,

Cordially,

Bill Sullivan

* The exception here is Soviet-bloc espionage.